

T H E
SCRIPTURE-DOCTRINE
OF THE 2
SACRAMENT
OF THE
LORD'S SUPPER
BRIEFLY STATED.

Then said Jesus unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. John vi. 53.



L O N D O N :

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Advertisement.

THE following short treatise was drawn up at the request of a charitable lady, and is now published for the benefit of the poor. The design of it was to open to them the nature and use of the holy sacrament: And it was thought the most proper method, not to be large and full upon the subject, but to lay it before them in one view, that they might understand it more easily, and remember it the better. Reader, before thou openest it, ask him, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift, to accompany thy perusal of it with his grace and blessing: And if it be of any service to thee, give the glory to GOD, and pray for the Author.



T H E
SCRIPTURE-DOCTRINE
OF THE
SACRAMENT, &c.

THE sacrament of the Lord's Supper was ordained by Christ himself. Before his passion he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave it to his disciples, as the outward and visible sign of his body broken; and he took wine and blessed it, and gave it to them, as the outward and visible sign of his blood poured out, and shed for the sins of the world. And then he commanded them, and us, to continue to do the same in remembrance of him; so that we must first know what we are to remember of him in this ordinance, before we can keep it aright. We must consider the scope and design of it; for what end Christ left us these memorials of his body and blood; upon what motive he required us to partake of them; and what benefit we are to receive thereby. For these reasons it is of great consequence clearly to understand the nature and use of the Lord's Supper. Reader, I hope thou seest the importance of it in a strong light. May God give thee a right judgment in this weighty matter. Consider then that

I.

You have an immortal spirit within you, whose life of happiness depends as much upon God the Father of spirits, as your body does upon the food and elements of this world.

MOSES has given us this account of the two parts, of which man is composed. *The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul, Gen. ii. 7.* The bodily part was formed of the dust of the ground, but the spiritual part was immediately infused, and breathed from God; and as they had a different original, so they go to different places; when the

body dies, it returns to dust, but the spirit, the breath of life, returns to God that gave it. While man continued innocent, his soul had a life of happiness dependent upon God; for as it is created, it must be dependent, and its life must be supported by that being, on whom it depends. And this being is God: *for with thee is the fountain of life*, says the Psalmist, Psal. xxxvi. 9. All spiritual life flows from God, as from its proper fountain, and is supported by a vital union with him, as much as the body is supported by a vital union with the food and elements of this world: what these are to the life of the body, that is God to the life of the soul, *for he holdeth our souls in life*, Ps. lxvi. 9. He holdeth and maintaineth the soul in its spiritual life. And when there was no sin in the world it was an happy life. So long as all things continued very good, the soul enjoyed sweet and blessed communion with God. It walked in the light of his countenance, and the sense of his continual presence filled it with peace, and love, and joy. But this happy state of things did not last long: for

II.

Your soul lost this life of happiness by sin.

THE whole book of God proves this truth. In express words it says, that fallen man is *alienated from the life of God*, Eph. iv. 18. being estranged from that life, which God hath given to, and supported in man, while he continued innocent. Upon sin's entering into the world, the sentence took place, *dying thou shalt die*, the body became mortal, and the soul was alienated from that divine support, wherein its life of happiness consisted, and died from God, which is the worst kind of death. The vital union between him and the soul was broken; *for your sins have separated between you and your God*, Isa. lix. 2. they have separated between you and the fountain of life, they have cut off all communion with him; by which means being dead in trespasses and sins, which we all are by nature, the soul is as dead to the offices of spiritual life, as a cold lifeless corpse is to the offices of animal life.

If these scriptures do not appear to you with convincing evidence, consult matter of fact. How is the case with your own soul? Was not you by nature dead to God? If not, then you was always alive to the things of God. From your very infancy you took no delight in childish diversions, much less in sin, in pride, in envy, in lying, and swearing, or in any act of uncleanness;

ness; but your heart was full of love to God, and every expression of that love was delightful. You knew no joy like that of prayer. To be continually pouring out your praise and thanksgivings to your Creator, was your heaven. The world was so dead to you, that its strongest temptations had no force. Wealth and honour, and pleasure, and whatever is called great and mighty, had no charms compared with devotion. Say, was this always the sweet and holy frame of your soul from the first dawning and opening of reason? Was your heart always thus full of love to God, and always thus happy in communion with him? Were your affections never drawn away by any worldly objects, whereby you robbed God of that continual service of all your faculties, which was his due? Can you lay claim to this perfect uninterrupted obedience? Surely, you will not: for what man is he that liveth, and sinneth not? Nay, what man is there who has not found a coldness and deadness of his affections, when he tried to fix them upon God, and the things of God? Have not you found it in yourself? Do you not now find it? Try then to pray for two or three hours together without one wandering thought. You cannot. Why then, these are evident proofs, that your soul is alienated from the life of God, and

III.

You have no power in yourself to recover this life of God in the soul.

THE law runs in this style, *the soul that sinneth, it shall die*. Death is the wages of sin, *you have sinned*; for all have sinned, and God is just to give you your wages. He has promised them, and he is faithful and true to fulfil his promises. He must fulfil them, unless you can by some means be restored to his favour, and recover the life of grace in the soul; for if there be truth in God, *the soul that sinneth it shall die*. But you can do nothing to merit the recovery of this life, because your whole nature is sinful and guilty. You are in the state of a condemned malefactor, with this peculiar circumstance of distress, that you have not even a desire to apply for pardon. Your soul is so absolutely enslaved to sin, that it loves its prison and its dungeon. Every faculty is under the bondage of Satan, and able to work out nothing but sin. In this state you are utterly helpless and miserable. "Your condition is such (as our church in her tenth article expresses it) "that you cannot turn "and prepare yourself (and much less attain) by your own natural " strength

“ strength to faith and calling upon God — the grace of Christ
 “ must go before to give you a good will, and then work with
 “ you when you have that good will.” The first good motion
 of the will comes from Christ, even the desire to live unto God is
 his free gift, and every step is his work, until the life of God be
 perfected in the soul. He only, whose voice is to call the
 dead out of their graves, can call to the sinner, and be obeyed,
awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead, and Christ
shall give thee life. Christ, and Christ only, has life to give to
 the dead in sin. The fancied light of nature, the religion of
 nature, morality, learning, arts and sciences, these with all other
 natural and acquired talents, can no more revive a dead sinner,
 than they can create a world. The conviction of this truth is
 absolutely necessary; for you can never apply to Christ for the
 free gift of his divine life, until you be perfectly convinced
 that you want it, and that you can do nothing to merit it. You
 can have no motive to apply to him, until you find your own
 helplessness, and therefore if you never saw your want of this
 divine life, intreat him to shew you your deadness in sin. Beg
 of him to open the eyes of your understanding, that you may be
 able to see in what a wretched dead state you have been all your
 days, and may be thereby stirred up to pray with strong crying
 and tears to the Prince of life, that he would raise you from
 the death of sin unto a life of righteousness: for,

IV.

*Jesus Christ came into the world to recover for sinners that life
 of happiness which they had forfeited.*

THE scriptures are full of this truth from beginning to end.
 Jesus Christ is there set forth as the Almighty Saviour
 and Redeemer, who *giveth life unto the world.* He was the
 eternal and self-existent God, equal in every perfection and attri-
 bute with the Father and the Holy Spirit, and he was pleased out
 of his infinite mercy and love to be united to our nature, by
 which union God and man became one Christ; so that he who
 obeyed the law, suffered, and died for us, was truly a divine and
 infinite person. By his obedience, he atoned for our breach of
 the divine law; by his sufferings, he freed us from the punish-
 ment due to the breach of it; and he died that we *might live*
through him, (1 John iv. 9.) a life of grace in this world, and a
 life of glory for ever in heaven, whereby what he said of him-
 self

self might be fulfilled ; *I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly,* John x. 10.

This is the scripture account of the gracious method, by which our forfeited life was restored. It is the free gift of Jesus Christ, the lord of life and glory. He is the Lord God omnipotent, who created the heavens and the earth, and without whom was not any thing made that was made. He gave us our life at first. And when it was forfeited by sin, he came from heaven to redeem it ; so that we owe him a double debt of gratitude. It was wonderful love, that he should create us at first out of nothing ; but more wonderful, that he should come down from heaven to lay down his own life a ransom for ours. This love surpasseth all understanding. Men, who have never tasted it, can form no estimate of it ; and they who have tasted it by faith, acknowledge it to be greater than heart can conceive, or tongue can utter. However, they know all that can be understood of it in the present world ; for faith receives this spiritual life from Jesus Christ. Faith is that divine grace planted in the soul by the Holy Spirit, whereby it is vitally united to Jesus Christ, and receives support from him to begin, carry on, and perfect its spiritual life, and this brings me to prove that

V.

Faith receives from Jesus Christ the spiritual life, which he came to give unto the world.

FAITH, as a Christian grace, is widely different from an historical assent ; for it does not only believe that Christ has life to give to a sinful world, but also receives it from him. This is essential to a true living faith, which is a vital uniting principle, and by which the believer is intimately joined to Christ, and draws supplies of nourishment from him, for the support of his spiritual life. The following scriptures prove it to be of the essence of true faith, to receive this life from Christ. *These are written, says St. John, xx. 31. that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name. I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord, John xi. 25. he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live ; and whoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die ; for he shall be as closely connected with the root and stock of all spiritual life, as the branches of the vine are with the root. I am the*

vine, saith the Lord of life, *ye are the branches; as the branch cannot live, and bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me.* By believing, we abide in him; for faith is the bond of this union. It engrafts us into Christ, who is the root and stock of our spiritual life. In him we live; from him we receive nourishment, and are enabled to bear much fruit to the glory of God. This is the happy state of Christians, who believe on the Son of God, and have everlasting life; but miserable beyond conception is the state of them, who are not united to him; for he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him, *John iii. 36.*

These scriptures clearly prove, that faith is the hand, which God enables us to put forth, and by which we lay hold of Christ, and life in him. The blessed apostle *Paul* had happy experience of this doctrine; he relates it in these remarkable words, *Gal. ii. 20. I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.* In this passage we have full proof of all the former propositions; as first, *St. Paul* was crucified and dead to sin with Christ, which plainly supposes him to have been alive to sin before; and being thus crucified and dead, *nevertheless I live*, says he, a life of righteousness and holiness, but not by any power or virtue in myself. No, I could not make myself righteous or holy—*Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me*: he is the author of this life, and faith is that grace, by which we receive and enjoy it; *the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.* Oh! happy *Paul*, who could without presumption say, the Son of God loved me, and gave himself for me. Reader, wouldst not thou give all the world to be able to say the same? Thou wouldst. Why then, pray to God for the gift of faith, and when he gives it thee, it will make thee as happy as it did *Paul*. It will let thee know, that Christ also loves thee, and gave himself for thy sins. May the spirit of grace bestow upon thee the true living faith, that upon thine own experience thou mayest be able to repeat the words after the apostle, and say, “I am crucified with Christ, “nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and “the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of “the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”

VI.

In the sacrament the body and blood of Christ, from which faith receives its spiritual life, are represented by bread and wine.

IT was the great end and design of the Christian revelation to discover to us in what method the life, which we had forfeited, was to be restored. The knowledge of this is of the greatest moment. Our happy eternity depends upon it; and therefore God has been pleased to teach it us in the plainest manner. He has condescended to our capacities, and has made use of sensible objects to explain matters of faith. The soul does not see at present, but thro' the eyes of the body. Invisible and spiritual things must be brought down to our understandings by visible and material: and this is done in the sacrament of the Lord's supper. We know that our animal life cannot be sustained without proper nourishment, neither can our spiritual life; for God has been pleased to institute and appoint the meat and drink, which sustain the life of the body, to be the outward and visible signs of that spiritual meat and drink, which sustain the life of the soul. He has ordained bread and wine to represent to the outward senses the spiritual support, which the soul receives from the body and blood of Christ. And in consequence of God's ordination.

VII.

It is as certain a truth, that the body and blood of Christ do support the life of grace in the soul, as that bread and wine do support life in the body.

MAN, as was before observed, in his present embodied state, does not see spiritual objects, but as they are compared with material. The revelation of God in the Old Testament and the New, is adapted to man in this state. Objects of faith are represented to him by objects of sense. Outward things are ordained to stand for inward; and God, who cannot lie, has instituted the outward sign, to give us evidence of the inward grace. He has instituted bread and wine, to represent the body and blood of Christ: and as bread is the staff of the life, it is therefore

therefore a just picture of the bread of life, which Christ brought down with him from heaven; and as wine maketh glad the heart of man, it is therefore a just picture of that most precious blood, which alone taketh away the sins of the world; and therefore which alone maketh glad the hearts of sinners. The bread and wine thus instituted, are signs to set before our senses what Christ's body and blood are to do to the soul; from whence arose the necessity of giving the same name to the sign as to the thing signified: because what the sign does to the body, the thing signified does to the soul. When Christ took up the bread, and said, *This is my body*, and the wine, and said, *This is my blood*, he spake the language which the Old Testament had always used, and the only language which men could understand: for it was a received rule in the Old Testament to call the sign and the thing signified by the same name; and it will always be a received rule, so long as men are confined to sense, and cannot see spiritual objects, but by their material types and instituted figures. You cannot see how the body and blood of Christ support the soul, but you see that bread and wine do support the body; and the infallible God has engaged his word and truth to you, that there is as true and real support for your souls in the body and blood of Christ, as there is for your bodies in the bread and wine. He instituted the sign, to set before your eyes a picture, both of the life which Christ gave, as also of the manner in which he gave it: for his death was the purchase of your life. His body was so bruised, wounded, and smitten for your transgressions, that he says in the Psalms, *there was no whole part in it*; therefore the sacramental bread is broken, and the wine is poured out, as his most precious blood was out of every pore and vein. I might trace the likeness in many more instances, but these may suffice to shew the propriety of instituting bread to represent the body of Christ, which is meat not figuratively or metaphorically, but indeed and in truth; and wine to represent the blood of Christ, which is drink indeed and in truth. Thus far the meaning of the sacrament, as to the outward and visible sign, and as to the inward and spiritual grace is plain enough. As a sign it is generally well understood, but then it is not merely a sign; it is something more: For

VIII.

The bread and wine are not only signs, that there is spiritual life in Christ, but also as under a seal they convey it.

THIS is the chief part of the sacrament, and I fear it is greatly mistaken. To set a seal to a writing or instrument, is making all that is contained in it authentic and valid. When a man sets a seal to an instrument he declares, this is my act and deed. So setting a seal to the elements is a legal conveyance of what they signify, and whosoever receives them under God's seal, he verily and indeed receives the body and blood of Christ, together with the spiritual life purchased by them. In this sense St. Paul certainly understood the Lord's supper; for he speaks of it 1 Cor. x. 16. not only as a sign, but also as a real seal. *The cup of blessing, which we bless, is it not the communion of* (or that which communicates to us) *the blood of Christ? The bread which we break is it not the communion of* (or that which communicates to us) *the body of Christ?* In the cup we communicate and partake of not the mere sign, but of the blood of Christ. In the bread we communicate and partake of not the mere sign, but of the body of Christ: and whoever thus communicates and partakes of the body and blood of Christ, to him the outward elements are a seal of that spiritual and divine life, which Christ's body broken, and his blood poured out, were the means of purchasing for a sinful world.

IX.

The bread and wine are signs to all receivers, but seals only to the faithful.

OUR church has determined this point in her 28th article, where it is said, that "the body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the supper only after an heavenly and spiritual manner. And the mean, whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the supper, is faith." Faith is the means of our communicating of the elements in an heavenly and spiritual manner; and this faith is the gift of God. His good Spirit alone is able to apply to the hearts of the communicants the divine support signified by the outward elements; and it is his office to make the application, and to give us an interest in
all

all the promises of the gospel: for it is certain none but the Holy Spirit of promise can seal to us a spiritual blessing. His grace must be in the heart, convincing us of our want of spiritual life, and of the necessity of seeking it from Jesus Christ, before we can perceive anything more in the elements than bread and wine; and he must have given us some knowledge of our interest in Christ, before faith can live and feed upon the body and blood of Christ under the outward elements. Sacramental communion is, no doubt, to communicate and partake of the body and blood of Christ. But who are able to communicate in this manner? None but believers, who have the eye of faith open to look through the signs to the things signified. And who enables them to communicate and partake of the things signified under the signs? The Spirit of God, who dwells in the hearts of believers; and who seals to them the promises of God made to them in this sacrament. The necessity of his application and sealing them was so evident to the primitive Christians, that at the consecration of the sacramental wine the priest used to mix water with it, which was as if he had declared in so many words — I believe the influence of the Holy Spirit to be necessary to apply to our souls the merits of Christ's blood, and therefore I pour in this water, which is the known emblem of the grace of the Holy Spirit, that no person may expect spiritual and divine life from the bare receiving of the outward elements: the Holy Spirit must be in his heart, in order to make it a spiritual service, and to render it the means of conveying spiritual blessings.

X.

The state of the doctrine from what has been said.

WE are all by nature dead in trespasses and sins. We forfeited and lost that life of happiness, which innocent man enjoyed, while he walked in the presence of God, and had sweet communion with him. And we can do nothing to recover this life of God in the soul; so that if he had left us to ourselves, we must have dragged on a miserable existence, until the mortal body should have fallen into the grave, and the soul should have perished for ever from God and glory. But thanks be to the ever blessed Trinity for contriving the gracious plan of our redemption. Thanks be to God the Father for sending the Son of his love to recover the spiritual and divine life, which we had forfeited and lost. Thanks be to the Holy Spirit, who enables

us by the hand of faith to receive this spiritual and divine life. And thanks be to Jesus, the prince of life, who was pleased to institute bread and wine, to be signs to the bodily senses of his body and blood, and to be seals to the soul when applied by faith. This is the state of the doctrine; from whence it follows, that unless you eat of the flesh of Christ with faith, and drink his blood with faith, receiving verily and indeed under the signs the things signified, then Christ himself declares, *John vi. 53. that you have no life in you*—You have none of that life, which he came to give unto sinners, but you are as dead to God, and to the things of God, as a lifeless corpse is to the things of this world: for you are alienated from the life of God, and must be separated for ever, unless faith unite you to Jesus Christ, and give you life through him.

XI.

The application of the whole to three different sorts of persons, to them who have not the true living faith in Christ, to them who desire it, and to them who have it.

READER, this is the main point; and thou must bear with me, while I ask thee in the spirit of love, Whether thou hast received this true living faith? Hast thou an interest in Christ, and dost thou know it so clearly, that thou canst trust all thy concerns in time and in eternity with him? If thy soul be not in this happy state, then consider what danger thou art in. Thou art under the guilt of all thy sins; the holy, just, and good law of heaven has found thee guilty, and thou must suffer the deserved punishment in soul and body for ever. And when an almighty God comes to inflict this punishment on thee, wretched man think, oh think, what will be then thy distress! Does the apprehension of it, while thou art reading this, give thee no uneasiness? That is an exceeding bad symptom; for then sin has destroy'd all motions of grace, and thou art quite dead in trespasses and sins.

What! may some of you say, can I, who am alive, and in good health, be in this dead state? Yes, you certainly may, and as you have no living faith, you are indeed in it: for this spiritual deadness is very consistent with all the offices of animal life. Nay, you may be a man of gaiety and pleasure, you may be seen at all publick places, you may be the delight and admiration of the polite world, and yet you may be all the time
dead

dead to God, and the things of God; the more alive you are to the world, the more dead will you be to God. As the apostle says, *She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth*, 1 Tim. v. 6. A life of sensual pleasure is a spiritual death: so that you may be alive and cheerful, and in high spirits, and yet the immortal soul within you may be all the time dead to God. You may feed and indulge your dear body with good things, and your poor soul may be starving. And when this is the case, the more flourishing your outward condition is, the less will you perceive of your spiritual deadness, because you will go on the more smoothly and merrily, until God shall stop you by some sickness, or affliction, or shall call you by his word, and shall send his good Spirit with it to speak to your hearts, *Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee life*. Oh! that he may awaken thee, reader, if thou art now in the dead sleep of sin, and may give thee faith to find life to thy soul in Jesus Christ.

But however, until God begin this work, you are not expected at the Lord's table. Until you be awakened, and see the deadness of your hearts to the things of God, you must eat and drink unworthily; for you do not desire that Christ's body and blood may support your spiritual life, as the bread and wine support animal life. Without this desire you *cannot discern the Lord's body*, you cannot discern any thing more in the elements, than in common bread and wine, and therefore if you partake of them, it must be upon some wrong motive, because you want the proper dispositions, namely, an humble sense of your want of spiritual life, and an earnest desire to receive it from Jesus Christ.

In hopes that God will send some of these considerations to your hearts with the effectual working of his grace, and stir up in you this good desire, I proceed to apply what has been said to them, who have already this desire. Reader, is this thy case? Hast thou been deeply convinced of thy sinful and dead state by nature, and hast thou been led to seek life from the free grace of the Lord of life, and art thou now waiting for it in his appointed ways and means? If this be thy state, thou art safe. Thou art invited, and thou wilt be a welcome guest at the Lord's table. Whoever is awakened, and finds his soul alienated from the life of God, and is hungering and thirsting for that spiritual life, which was purchased for him by the body and blood of Christ; he will attend upon this holy ordinance. Come, my brother, with full trust and confidence to this

this spiritual and heavenly feast. Lift up thine heart to God in prayer, and desire thou mayest find his presence in his own ordinance. Be encouraged from the experience of others, who went hungering and thirsting as thou dost, and he sent them away filled with good things. Oh! that their case may be thine, and soon, that thou mayest find grace to enable thee to live a life of holiness, to the glory of thy redeeming God. And to them who have received spiritual life from Christ, through faith, I make my last application.

My Christian brethren, I need not try to stir you up to a frequent attendance at the Lord's table. The many sweet and refreshing seasons, which you have enjoyed there, weigh more with you than a thousand arguments. Let me only remind you of the dignity of these holy mysteries. Here are the signs of Christ's body and blood, and the seals of the life which we receive from Christ's body and blood in this world and in the next. The faithful now receive with the elements that spiritual and divine life from Christ, which they are to receive from him in heaven: for here is *the bread which he brought down with him from heaven*, and *the hidden manna*, with which he has promised to feed them, that overcome, for ever and ever; and for these reasons faith sets an high value upon the instituted signs of spiritual life, because it receives under them the thing signified. Raise your devotion from this consideration. Go with humility to receive the signs and seals of your spiritual and divine life: and may the Lord Jesus be with you at his own table. May his good spirit prepare us all to communicate worthily, that we may spiritually eat the flesh of Christ and drink his blood; that we may dwell in Christ, and Christ in us; that we may be one with Christ, and Christ with us; and being thus united, may the body and blood of Jesus Christ preserve our bodies and souls unto everlasting life. So be it Lord Jesus. Amen, and Amen.

F I N I S.



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